UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

Benjamin Buono,	: Civil Action No.:
Plaintiff,	· :
V.	:
AmSher Collection Services, Inc.; and DOES 1-10, inclusive,	: : COMPLAINT
Defendant.	: :

For this Complaint, the Plaintiff, Benjamin Buono, by undersigned counsel, states as follows:

JURISDICTION

- 1. This action arises out of Defendant's repeated violations of the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1692, et seq. ("FDCPA"), and the invasions of Plaintiff's personal privacy by the Defendant and its agents in their illegal efforts to collect a consumer debt.
 - 2. Supplemental jurisdiction exists pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1367.
- 3. Venue is proper in this District pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b), in that the Defendants transact business in this District and a substantial portion of the acts giving rise to this action occurred in this District.

PARTIES

4. The Plaintiff, Benjamin Buono ("Plaintiff"), is an adult individual residing in Wyndmoor, Pennsylvania, and is a "consumer" as the term is defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(3).

- 5. The Defendant, AmSher Collection Services, Inc. ("AmSher"), is a Alabama business entity with an address of 600 Beacon Parkway West, Suite 300, Birmingham, Alabama 35209, operating as a collection agency, and is a "debt collector" as the term is defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(6).
- 6. Does 1-10 (the "Collectors") are individual collectors employed by AmSher and whose identities are currently unknown to the Plaintiff. One or more of the Collectors may be joined as parties once their identities are disclosed through discovery.
 - 7. AmSher at all times acted by and through one or more of the Collectors.

ALLEGATIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL COUNTS

A. The Debt

- 8. The Plaintiff allegedly incurred a financial obligation in the approximate amount of \$350.00 (the "Debt") to TMobile (the "Creditor").
- 9. The Debt arose from services provided by the Creditor which were primarily for family, personal or household purposes and which meets the definition of a "debt" under 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(5).
- 10. The Debt was purchased, assigned or transferred to AmSher for collection, or AmSher was employed by the Creditor to collect the Debt.
- 11. The Defendants attempted to collect the Debt and, as such, engaged in "communications" as defined in 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(2).

B. AmSher Engages in Harassment and Abusive Tactics

- 12. Within the last year, the Defendants contacted the Plaintiff in an attempt to collect the Debt.
- 13. AmSher has placed as many as five (5) calls a day to Plaintiff's cellular telephone in an attempt to collect the Debt.
 - 14. Plaintiff spoke with AmSher on or about May 22, 2012.
- 15. Plaintiff notified AmSher that he disputes the validity of the Debt and informed AmSher that he had previously sent a letter to the Creditor outlining his dispute.
- 16. Plaintiff explicitly advised AmSher that he does not intend on paying the Debt to AmSher and asked AmSher to cease placing any subsequent calls to him regarding the Debt.
- 17. Despite Plaintiff's specific request for AmSher to stop calling him, AmSher continued to place daily calls to Plaintiff's cellular telephone.
- 18. Further, AmSher responded to Plaintiff's request by stating "We're still going to call you."

C. Plaintiff Suffered Actual Damages

- 19. The Plaintiff has suffered and continues to suffer actual damages as a result of the Defendants' unlawful conduct.
- 20. As a direct consequence of the Defendants' acts, practices and conduct, the Plaintiff suffered and continues to suffer from humiliation, anger, anxiety, emotional distress, fear, frustration and embarrassment.

21. The Defendants' conduct was so outrageous in character, and so extreme in degree, as to go beyond all possible bounds of decency, and to be regarded as atrocious, and utterly intolerable in a civilized community.

COUNT I

VIOLATIONS OF THE FDCPA 15 U.S.C. § 1692, ET SEQ.

- 22. The Plaintiff incorporates by reference all of the above paragraphs of this Complaint as though fully stated herein.
- 23. The Defendants' conduct violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692c(a)(1) in that Defendants contacted the Plaintiff at a place and during a time known to be inconvenient for the Plaintiff.
- 24. The Defendants' conduct violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692d in that Defendants engaged in behavior the natural consequence of which was to harass, oppress, or abuse the Plaintiff in connection with the collection of a debt.
- 25. The Defendants' conduct violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692d(5) in that Defendants caused a phone to ring repeatedly and engaged the Plaintiff in telephone conversations, with the intent to annoy and harass.
- 26. The foregoing acts and omissions of the Defendants constitute numerous and multiple violations of the FDCPA, including every one of the above-cited provisions.
 - 27. The Plaintiff is entitled to damages as a result of Defendants' violations.

COUNT II

<u>VIOLATIONS OF THE PENNSYLVANIA FAIR CREDIT EXTENSION</u> UNIFORMITY ACT, 73 P.S. § 2270, ET SEQ.

28. The Plaintiff incorporates by reference all of the above paragraphs of this Complaint as though fully stated herein.

- 29. The Plaintiff is a "consumer," as defined in 73 P.S. § 2270.3.
- 30. The Defendants are each individually a "debt collector" as defined in 73 P.S. § 2270.3.
- 31. The Defendants violated provisions of the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1692, et seq., which constitutes an unfair or deceptive practice under 73 P.S. § 2270.4(a).
 - 32. The Plaintiff is entitled to damages as a result of the Defendants' violations.

COUNT III

INVASION OF PRIVACY BY INTRUSION UPON SECLUSION

- 33. The Plaintiff incorporates by reference all of the above paragraphs of this Complaint as though fully stated herein.
- 34. The Restatement of Torts, Second, § 652(b) defines intrusion upon seclusion as, "One who intentionally intrudes…upon the solitude or seclusion of another, or his private affairs or concerns, is subject to liability to the other for invasion of privacy, if the intrusion would be highly offensive to a reasonable person."
- 35. Pennsylvania further recognizes the Plaintiff's right to be free from invasions of privacy, thus the Defendants violated Pennsylvania state law.
- 36. The Defendants intentionally intruded upon Plaintiff's right to privacy by continually harassing Plaintiff with excessive phone calls after Plaintiff specifically asked Defendant not to do so.
- 37. The telephone calls made by the Defendants to Plaintiff were so persistent and repeated with such frequency as to be considered, "hounding the plaintiff," and, "a substantial

burden to her existence," thus satisfying the Restatement of Torts, Second, § 652(b) requirement for an invasion of privacy.

- 38. The conduct of the Defendants in engaging in the illegal collection activities resulted in multiple invasions of privacy in such a way as would be considered highly offensive to a reasonable person.
- 39. As a result of the intrusions and invasions, the Plaintiff is entitled to actual damages in an amount to be determined at trial from the Defendants.
- 40. All acts of the Defendants and its agents were committed with malice, intent, wantonness, and recklessness, and as such, the Defendants are subject to punitive damages.

COUNT IV

<u>VIOLATIONS OF THE PENNSYLVANIA UNFAIR TRADE PRACTICES AND CONSUMER PROTECTION LAW, 73 P.S. § 201-1, ET SEQ.</u>

- 41. The Plaintiff incorporates by reference all of the above paragraphs of this Complaint as though fully stated herein.
- 42. The Defendants' violations of the Pennsylvania Fair Credit Extension Uniformity

 Act constitute per se violations under the Pennsylvania Unfair Trade Practices and Consumer

 Protection Law.
- 43. The Defendants' acts were done with malicious, intentional, willful, reckless, wanton and negligent disregard for Plaintiff's rights under the law.
- 44. As a result of the Defendants' violations, the Plaintiff has suffered ascertainable losses entitling the Plaintiff to actual, statutory and treble damages.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, the Plaintiff prays that judgment be entered against the Defendants:

- 1. Actual damages pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(1) against the Defendants;
- 2. Statutory damages of \$1,000.00 pursuant to 15 U.S.C. \$1692k(a)(2)(A) against the Defendants;
- 3. Costs of litigation and reasonable attorney's fees pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(3) and 73 P.S. § 2270.5 against the Defendants;
- 4. Statutory damages pursuant to 73 P.S. § 2270.5(c);
- 5. Actual damages pursuant to 73 P.S. § 201-9.2(a);
- 6. Statutory damages pursuant to 73 P.S. § 201-9.2(a);
- 7. Treble damages pursuant to 73 P.S. § 201-9.2(a);
- 8. Actual damages from the Defendants for all damages including emotional distress suffered as a result of the intentional, reckless, and/or negligent FDCPA violations and intentional, reckless, and/or negligent invasions of privacy in an amount to be determined at trial for the Plaintiff;
- 9. Punitive damages; and
- 10. Such other and further relief as may be just and proper.

TRIAL BY JURY DEMANDED ON ALL COUNTS

Dated: June 18, 2012

Respectfully submitted, By /s/ JBB8445 Jody B. Burton, Esq. Bar No.: 71681 LEMBERG & ASSOCIATES L.L.C. 1100 Summer Street, 3rd Floor Stamford, CT 06905 Telephone: (203) 653-2250 Facsimile: (203) 653-3424

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